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Chiefs’ Address To The Nation

Tribal Members,
Best wishes to all our tribal students who have started school this 2011-12 academic year. May your goals and ambitions be attained as you prepare yourselves to enter the next stage of your lives. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of obtaining an education to help prepare you for your walk in life and what may cross your paths. May you be successful not only in the classroom but also in your extracurricular school activities



Chief George Thurman

and always be proud of your heritage. Keep our Creator in sight with daily prayer and always remember to give Him the praise and glory for your achievements. Please keep our Sac and Fox News notified of your accomplishments so all of your tribal members can share your success with you. I want to take this opportunity to thank all tribal members that voted in our recent General Election either by absentee ballot or in person, 493 total. You demonstrated that you care about the future of our Sac and Fox Nation government by exercising your right in the selection of the members of the Business Committee; now is the time to look to and align with the elected leadership as we advance together as a unified Nation.

Indian Country News
NCAI News - August 18, 2011
Keystone XL Tar Sands Oil Pipeline “Poses Grave Dangers” to Tribal Nations

National Congress of American Indians opposes Keystone XL Tar Sands Oil Pipeline; calls for energy demand to be met by responsible energy development

WASHINGTON, DC - In anticipation of a forthcoming Environmental Impact Statement by U.S. State Department on the proposed Keystone XL Oil Pipeline, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) issued a statement today saying the proposed pipeline expansion could severely impact Native American communities and “poses

grave dangers if it is constructed.” The statement released by NCAI, the nation’s oldest, largest, and most representative American Indian and Alaska Native advocacy organization, reaffirms the position of its members and expresses solidarity with Canadian First Nations concerned about the project.

“The Keystone XL pipeline . . . would threaten, among other things, water aquifers, water ways, cultural sites, agricultural lands, animal life, public drinking water sources and other resources vital to the peoples of the region in which the pipeline is proposed to be constructed,” reads an NCAI resolution passed at the organization’s most recent gathering of members this past June.

The organization is calling for domestic energy demands to be met by developing energy resources responsibly in order to protect vital natural resources, such as vast water reserves.

“Homeland and economic security starts with energy security, but Indian Country wants it to be done right; not at the expense of the health of our communities and resources, both tribal and non-tribal,” said Jefferson Keel, President of NCAI, citing the importance of looking to clean domestic energy as a more reliable solution. “During challenging economic times in our country and in our tribal nations, domestic energy when developed responsibly can create jobs while ensuring that our people and natural resources remain safe and plentiful.”

The proposed expansion of the pipeline would cross through northern Alberta, Saskatchewan, Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Oklahoma with potential devastating impacts on communities in surrounding areas and states. A recent study by a University of Nebraska hydrologist outlines a worst case spill scenario, estimating that Keystone XL could spill as much as 7.9 million gallons in Nebraska’s Sandhills, polluting 5 billion gallons of groundwater with benzene, contaminating water used for agriculture and drinking drawn from the Ogallala Aquifer, and more than 6.9 million gallons of tar sands crude at the Yellowstone River crossing. That estimate far exceeds the Exxon Mobil’s July 1, 2011 spill of 42,000 gallons near the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation territory in south-central Montana, contaminating 240 miles of the Yellowstone River. Responsible alternatives to importing energy resources from outside the United States

are abundant, and specifically on tribal lands. In addition to plentiful traditional energy options on tribal lands, the National Renewable Energy Lab’s (NREL) estimates that the wind potential in Indian Country could provide 32 percent of U.S. annual electric generation, where as solar energy potential in Indian Country equals twice the total amount of electricity the U.S. generates per year.

The U.S. State Department is expected to issue the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the pipeline in mid-August. Following the issuance of the FEIS, the State Department will undergo a 90-day process to determine whether the pipeline serves the national interest. The National Interest Determination is made by the U.S. State Department and is the final step in the permitting process.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT
Draft Bill of Tribal VAWA Amendments Released by Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

This draft bill recognizes and strengthens concurrent tribal criminal jurisdiction to investigate, prosecute, convict, and sentence both Indians and non-Indians who assault Indian spouses, intimate partners, or dating partners, or who violate protection orders, in Indian Country. The bill improves the ability of tribes to respond to sex trafficking and strengthens accountability, coordination, and consultation with federal agencies. As always, the NCAI Task Force on Violence Against Women will continue to monitor this bill and the larger VAWA Reauthorization as they move through Congress and will keep Indian Country informed of their progress. I will be forwarding all information to our tribal membership in the tribal newspaper as we receive future updates.

Short Takes
*We now have money to launch our Economic Development Department beginning October 1st!

*We will be announcing the Open House of the new Sac and Fox Nation Firearms Training Center soon!

*More and more improvements are planned and taking shape to our tribal Capitol grounds and I will be reporting on these projects as they develop!!

I am taking this opportunity to thank everyone that supported and voted for me allowing me to serve our membership another four years. Continuity of the position of Principal Chief is so vital in any tribe and we will not slow down in our continued effort to provide more and better services to our people; as well as developing our economic development opportunities!

Once more I will state that it has been a privilege and honor to serve you as Principal Chief these last four years; and I am excited about our future and the advancements that the Sac and Fox Nation will be making over the next four years!

Sincerely, George Thurman, Principal Chief



Stephanie Snow, Historical Preservation Department assistant, is shown with some of the displays at the new Meskwaki History Museum now open on the Settlement west of Tama. Items reflect the rich culture and heritage of the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa. *Article and picture courtesy of Tama News-Herald/John Speer Editor.*

Meskwaki History Museum Open On Settlement

TAMA NEWS-HERALD- Just two months old and described in it’s “baby” stage by its director, the Meskwaki History Museum is now open on the Settlement west of Tama.

“We’re very proud” says Johnathan Buffalo, Historic Preservation director, of the long-sought museum. The central location to display the rich history of the Sac and Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa - the Meskwakis - has been a goal for a number of years.

It came into reality when space adjacent to the Tribal Center in the 300 block of Meskwaki Road was made available in May, Buffalo said.

Since then, Buffalo and Stephanie Snow, Historical Preservation Department assistant, have been busy relocating their offices to the new location and readying displays. The Preservation Office had been housed in the Public Works Building.

The only historical displays previously were those in the lobby of the hotel at the Meskwaki Bingo-Casino complex and a small display in the Tribal Offices.

The location also will provide space for a library where documents and photographs will be cataloged. Buffalo said the library and photo archives are both in development. He said the photos are currently being placed in sleeves.

The museum proposal was part of the Iowa Great Places

designation received by Tama County in 2010.

Buffalo said the Tribe had a small collection when he was hired originally as reparation director in 1993. Since then, the collection has been expanded.

“We treasure every inch of our culture,” Buffalo said. He explained something in the display which might have a market value of \$5,000 is not of more significance than a \$5 item to Tribal members.

“Some items have been repatriated and displayed, if we can use them,” Buffalo said. He said sacred objects held in a secure place and human remains are reburied.

He said groups of objects have been donated by Tribal members and some non-Indians as well. Another group of items were purchased at auction.

The museum space stated out as a day care center in the late 1970s according to Buffalo. In the mid-1980s it was being used as a primary school. After the new Meskwaki School was completed in 2002, the space was sued for a pharmacy and for CHR community health which were relocated to a new clinic a couple of years ago.

Buffalo said the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library at West Branch donated display cases and the Office of the State Archaeologist provided shelving. The museum also acquired metal cases from the Meskwaki Casino.

Sac and Fox Leaders In Road and Bridge Projects

The Sac and Fox Nation continues to be the leader among Indian tribes in the number of road improvement and bridge replacement projects. Since 1987, the Sac and Fox Nation Business Committee has ensured that the tribe has the most successful and comprehensive road and bridge program of any tribe in Oklahoma, and more than most tribes across the United States.

The Business Committee has consistently secured and maximized federal funds by cooperating with federal, state, county, and municipal partners to plan, design, and construct over 20 road projects and over 40 bridge projects located within the reservation boundaries in Lincoln, Payne, and Pottawatomie

counties. Tribal leaders have also improved the parking lots to several tribal facilities.

With the completion of the recent tribal cemetery road and chapel parking lot, construction has begun on the 3-mile Schlegel Road project in Payne County. In Lincoln County, the reconstruction of the Bell Cow Creek Bridge south of Chandler and the reconstruction of the Salt Creek Bridge east of Stroud are underway. These projects are expected to be completed by October 30, 2011.

The Business Committee remains committed to ensuring that tribal members and surrounding communities enjoy safe and improved transportation routes. *by Randle Carter*



Progress is being made on the new Sac and Fox Nation swimming facility and should be completed in the near future.

